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(54) **Document wallet.**

(57) A blank for a document folder, the blank including a rear wall forming panel foldably connected to a front wall forming panel, a pair of attachment panels located on opposed sides of the blank and being foldably connected to one of said wall forming panels, the other one of said wall forming panels and said attachment panels including co-operable latch means.

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Description

DOCUMENT WALLET

The present invention relates to a folder, in particular a folder for the loose storage of documents.

Folders for retaining loose documents are known but are usually in a preassembled condition when supplied to the user. Accordingly such folders take up a large amount of storage space which is undesirable particularly in an office where space is limited.

In addition, for presentation purposes, it is desirable for folders to have a maximum of flat space on which printing may be performed. Accordingly the use of glue lines, rivet holes etc used in prior art constructions for assembling a folder are undesirable as such use restricts the available space for printing.

The present invention aims to reduce the above drawbacks and also provide other advantages.

According to one aspect of the present invention there is provided a blank for a folder which can be folded into an erected folder without the need for separate fixing means.

The blank is preferably formed so that the folder in its assembled condition includes a front wall, a rear wall, a pair of side walls, and a bottom wall and preferably further includes a top wall hingedly connected to the rear wall for permitting or restricting access to the interior of the folder. The bottom wall is preferably hingedly connected along one side to a bottom side of the rear panel and is hingedly connected along its opposite side to the front panel. Each side wall is preferably hingedly connected along one side to a side of the rear wall and is attached by an integral latch formation to the front wall. It is envisaged that the side walls may alternatively be hingedly attached to the front wall and be attached to the rear wall by an integral latch formation.

The integral latch formation is preferably maintained in an engaged condition by outward bias of the sidewalls which is created by the inherent resilence of the sheet material when folding the blank and also created by the weight of documents contained within the erected folders.

According to another aspect of the present invention there is provided a folder formed from a blank as defined above.

Various aspects of the present invention are hereinafter described with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:-

Figure I is a schematic perspective view of a folder according to the present invention.

Figure 2 is a plan view of a blank suitable for forming the folder illustrated in Figure I.

The folder illustrated in Figure I includes a rear wall II, a front wall I2, a pair of side walls I4, I6 respectively, a bottom wall I8, a top wall 20 and a closure flap 22 attached to the top wall 20. The upper sides of the rear, front and side walls define a mouth 24 which provides access into the interior of the folder. The mouth 24 is conveniently enlarged as shown by forming a recess 25 in the upper portion of the front wall I2.

The flap 22 is provided with one part of a catch 28 and the front wall I2 is provided with a co-operating part of the catch 28 so that the top wall 20 and flap 22 may be moved to close the mouth 24 and be releasably retained in that position. The catch 28 may be of any conventional construction, but is preferably of a type that can be readily attached manually. If desired more than one catch 28 may be provided.

The blank 3 for forming the folder of Figure I is shown in Figure 2 and is conveniently formed in a single operation from a suitable sheet material. Suitable sheet materials include plastics sheet such as polypropylene of say a thickness between 0.5 mm to I.5 mm or card which may be laminated with a plastics film on one or both sides of the card.

In forming the blank, the blank is cut and is provided with various fold lines FL to define the following, a rear wall forming panel 40, a pair of side wall forming panels 42, 43 respectively, a bottom wall forming panel 46, a main front wall forming panel 48, a top wall forming panel 50, a closure flap forming panel 52, sidewall attachment panels 53, 54, a pair of co-operating latch formations 56, 57 and reinforcement tabs 58.

The attachment panels 53, 54 have formed therein a latch formation 56 in the form of a slit 60 having inwardly directed end portions 62 which define a tab receiving opening. The main front wall panel 48 is provided with a latch formation 57 in the form of a tab 65 which is defined by a 'U' shaped slit 66.

To erect a folder from the blank 30, the tabs 58 are folded toward the attached sidewall forming panel 42, 43 respectively, the sidewall forming panels 42, 43 are then folded toward the rear wall panel 40, and the attachment panels 53, 54 are folded toward the attached sidewall panel 42, 43 respectively.

The bottom wall panel 46 and main front wall panel 48 are folded toward the rear wall panel 40 to thereby overlap the folded attachment panels 53, 54.

The tabs 65 are then introduced through the tab receiving opening in the underlying attachment panel 53, 54 respectively to achieve a folder as illustrated in Figure I.

Formation of at least the fold lines defining the sidewalls and attachment panels 42, 43, 53 and 54 is performed so that after folding, those panels are biased to return toward their unfolded positions.

Accordingly, as seen in Figure I, sidewalls I4, I6 are biased outwardly and so urge the latch formations 56, 57 into engagement to thereby maintain the folder in its erected condition. It follows therefore that the latch formations 56, 57 may be in the form of a simple tab and accommodating slit, the tab and slit not requiring additional formations for restraining removal of the tab from the slit. Accordingly engagement of a tab into a co-operating slit is easily achieved.

If desired, the area around the formations 56, 57 may be reinforced to restrain tearing, particularly if

the blank is formed from card which has not been laminated. If the blank is made from a plastics sheet or a card which is laminated on one or both sides with a plastics film it has been found that such additional reinforcement is not necessary.

It will be appreciated that the folders of the present invention may be stored in a flat condition, which minimises the amount of storage space required, and that a folder is simply and quickly erected when required. The blank is also preferably provided with apertures 70 to enable the catch means to be attached in the correct position. Such catch means can be conveniently stored separately and attached to the blank prior to erection.

The front wall 12 is preferably formed as illustrated in Figure 1, namely from a main panel 48 and the upper portions of attachment panels 53 and 54. In this way it is possible to locate the latch formations 56, 57 near to the upper edge of the front panel 48 and yet at an intermediate position between the ends of each side wall.

It is envisaged that the side wall and associated attachment panel for each side wall may be attached to the front panel 48.

The material chosen for blank should have sufficient stiffness to maintain reasonable rigidity in the side walls and bottom wall to restrain collapse of the folder.

The reinforcement tabs 58 serve to restrain collapse of the folder at the bottom corners thereof.

If necessary, the tabs 58 may be extended in length as illustrated in broken lines in Figure 2 so that in the erected folder the terminal end portions 58a of the tabs 58 overlap one another. The overlapping end portions 58a are provided with co-operating latch means, in the form of slits 58b, to restrain longitudinal separation of the tabs 58. In this way the tabs not only serve to provide reinforvement for the bottom wall 46 but also act to restrain outward movement of the sidewalls 42, 43 at the bottom region thereof.

In view of the absence of fixing means for creating an erected folder large unimpeded surfaces are present on the folder which enable printing of promotional matter to be provided.

It will be appreciated that the above construction of blanks also conveniently enables a variety of sizes of folders to be produced simply by altering the dimensions of the blanks during manufacture. In addition, particularly for larger folders it is envisaged thatthe top wall forming panel 50 may be adapted, for instance by the provision of suitable apertures, for the attachment of a carrying handle.

It is also envisaged that a slim document folder may be formed by omitting the top, bottom and side wall forming panels 50, 46, 42 and 43 respectively.

Claims

1. A blank for a folder, the blank including a rear wall forming panel foldably connected to a front wall forming panel, a pair of attachment panels located on opposed sides of the blank, each attachment panel being foldably connected to one wall forming panel and arranged so that in the erected folder it resides in face to face contact with the other one of said wall panels, co-operable latch means being provided on said attachment panel and said other one of said wall forming panels for maintaining said face to face contact.

2. A blank according to Claim 1 wherein a bottom wall forming panel is located between the front and rear wall forming panels and a side wall forming panel is located between each attachment panel and said one wall forming panel to which it is foldably attached.

3. A blank according to Claim 2 wherein a reinforcement tab is foldably attached to each side wall forming panel at a bottom edge thereof.

4. A blank according to Claim 3 wherein the reinforcement tabs are of extended length so as to have overlapping terminal end portions in the erected folder.

5. A blank according to Claim 4 wherein the overlapping terminal end portions have co-operable latch means which when engaged restrain longitudinal separation of the tabs.

6. A blank according to any preceding claim wherein the co-operable latch means for the attachment panels and said wall forming panels comprises a tab formed on one panel and a tab accommodating slit formed on the other panel.

7. A blank according to Claim 6 wherein each tab accommodating slit has inwardly directed end portions.

8. A blank according to Claim 6 or 7 wherein said slit is arranged to be substantially parallel to the fold line of the attachment panel, the co-operating tab being arranged such that outward movement of the attachment panel toward its fold line whilst in said face to face contact is resisted by the root of the tab engaging said slit.

9. A blank according to any preceding claim wherein a closure flap forming panel is foldably connected to the rear wall forming panel.

10. A blank according to Claim 8 wherein a top wall forming panel is located between the rear wall forming panel and the closure flap forming panel.

11. A blank according to Claim 10 wherein the closure flap forming panel and the front wall forming panel are adapted to receive co-operable latch means for detachably connecting the free end of the closure flap to the front wall of the erected folder.

12. A blank according to any preceding claim formed in one piece from a sheet material.

13. A blank substantially as described with reference to and as illustrated in Figure 2 of the accompanying drawings.

14. A document folder constructed from a blank according to any preceding claim.

15. A document folder substantially as described with reference to and as illustrated in Figure 1 of the accompanying drawings.

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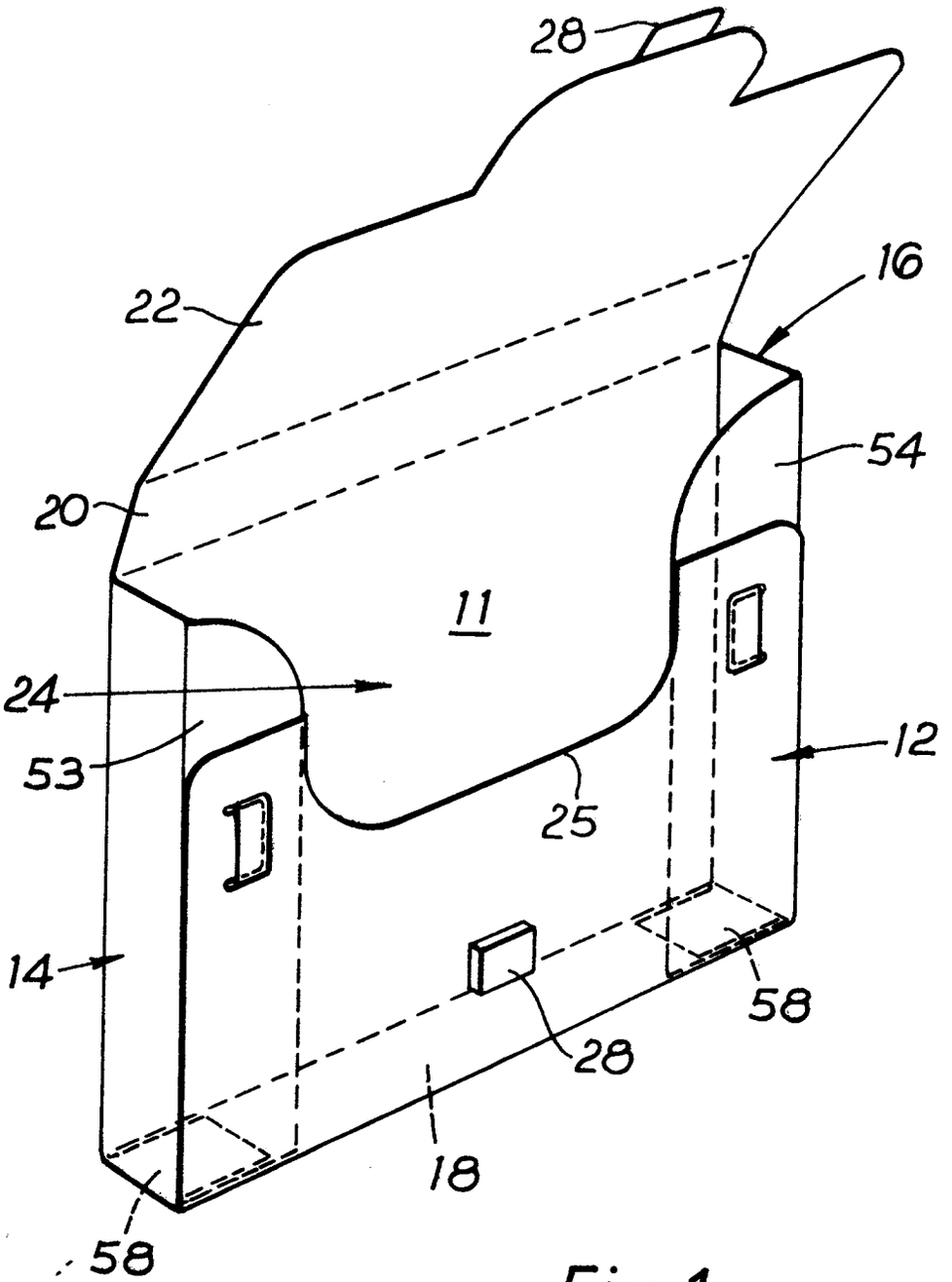

Fig. 1

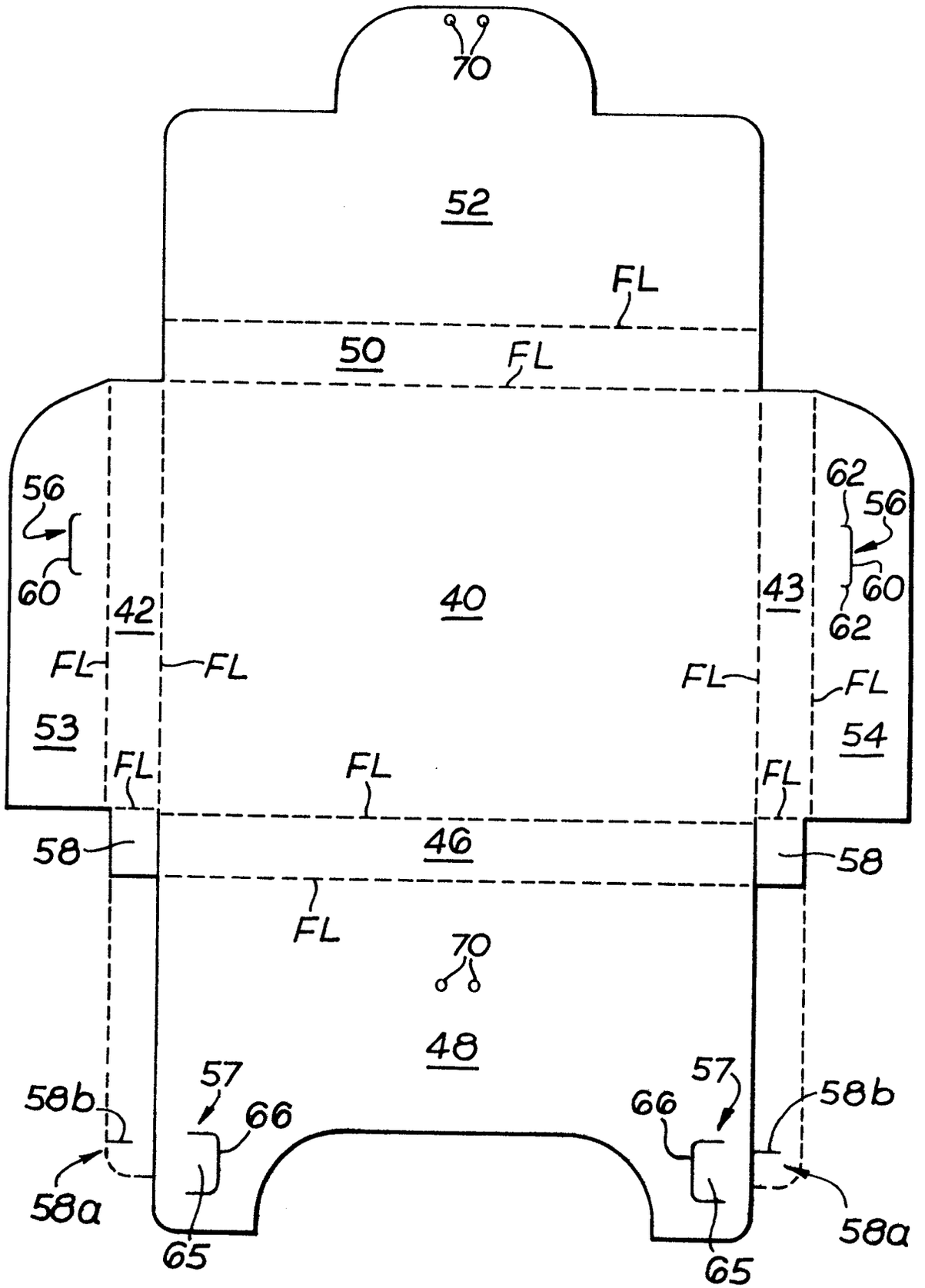

Fig. 2